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CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 009988

SIPDIS

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TAGS: OSCE PARM PREL KCFE
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR 5 FEBRUARY 2009 NATO VCC AND EXPERTS
MEETINGS

REF: (A) AC-319-WP(2008)0009-Rev7 (B) AC-319-
WP(2008)0010-Rev4 (C) X (D) X

Classified by Donna A. Phelan, Office Director, for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Reference: AC-319-WP(2008)0010-Rev4
USNATO 0019
STATE 168373

¶11. (C) Objectives for the VCC and Meeting of Experts, 5
February 2009 are as follows:

-- To adopt the draft International Staff (IS) paper on
Implementation Coordination for 2009 (REF A);

-- To provide additional edits and comments on the IS
working paper on Vienna Document 1999 (DV 99)
Implementation Issues (REF B) and, where appropriate, join
consensus;

-- To report on Allies' intentions for tabling topics at
the 2009 Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM)

-- To update the 2009 Schedule for VD 99 verification
activities

Implementation Coordination

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¶12. (SBU) Washington has reviewed the changes proposed to
REF A and believes that its provisions are adequate for
the purpose of coordinating Allied activities for the
remainder of 2009. USDel is authorized to join consensus
on revision seven. USDel should also verify that the IS
and Allies intend to review the provisions contained in
Ref A prior to initiating coordination of VD 99
verification activities for 2010.

Implementation Issues

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¶13. (SBU) The U.S. has supported coordinating NATO
approaches to VD 99 implementation issues for the purpose
of improving participating States (PS) interaction at the
2009 AIAM. In doing so, we have made clear that we do not
support using this coordination process to develop
measures at this time that would, in essence, open VD 99
for revision. We have also stated repeatedly that we do
not at this point note any serious implementation problems
or see the need for additional measures to significantly
improve the implementation of VD 99. Nevertheless, we
have welcomed the discussions in the VCC and have
supported the development of Allied papers expressing a

common NATO approach to issues (REF B), which are intended to provide a basis for national contributions at the 2009 AIAM.

¶4. (SBU) While we believe that Allies agree with the U.S. position--that VD 99 should not be opened at this time--we are concerned that tabling discussion papers at the AIAM without expressly stating so may send the wrong signal. Therefore, as a matter of principle, we would ask Allies to affirm that these papers, if agreed as agreed NATO approaches, are not to be offered as proposals for new measures and are not intended to imply a need to open VD ¶99. USDel should draw from the following points to gain Allied confirmation on the purpose and nature of these papers. USDel should first seek to insert appropriate language into the individual papers indicating that they contain suggestions for implementation activities of a voluntary nature. Should Allies oppose such changes, USDel may propose adding a line to the Chair's dissemination note in REF B that clearly defines the nature of annexed discussion papers. As a last resort, USDel may seek assurances from authoring Allies that when presented in Vienna, the authors will indicate that the courses of action suggested in their papers are voluntary in nature. USDel should stress that without modification to the papers, or assurances that the sponsoring Ally will specify the voluntary nature of the papers if used at the AIAM, the U.S. cannot join consensus on papers purporting an agreed NATO approach. USDel should draw from the following points:

-- The U.S. has repeatedly stated that we do not support changes to Vienna Document at this time.

-- We have supported discussions in the VCC and the development of Allied papers with the understanding that Allies agree that the papers would not suggest changes to VD 99.

-- We are concerned that, as written, our discussion papers remain ambiguous on this point and that tabling any of the remaining discussion papers at the AIAM without expressly stating that the course of action suggested are of a voluntary nature may send the wrong signal.

-- We propose that any paper purporting to be an agreed NATO approach include the phrase "voluntary activities for transparency and openness," or words to that effect. We would propose that this phrase be added to the titles or to the sub titles of the paragraphs containing the "agreed point of view."

¶5. (SBU) Edits to REF B, Annex 2, On Briefings by Commanders. The U.S. does not concur with the proposal to delete tics four and five under paragraph 3.4 and cannot join consensus with Rev 4. If these tics are restored to the text and, subject to conditions on the voluntary nature of these suggestions as noted in para 4 above, USDel may join consensus.

¶6. (SBU) USDel should also propose the following edits, which are necessary for the purpose of clarity and to ensure consistency with language in VD 99.

-- Paragraph 3.2 -- Replace the term "area" in tics one, three and five with the term "specified area."

-- Paragraph 3.3 should read as follows:

" 3.3 Briefings given by commanders or their representatives, participating in military activities should cover the following points:

- purpose of the activity
- command organization of the activity
- participating units/formations
- number of soldiers involved
- types and numbers of the participating major weapon and equipment systems

- course of the activity
- present state of the course of the activity"

-- Paragraph 3.4 should read as follows:

"3.4 Briefings given by commanders or their representatives of formations or units in the specified area should cover the following points:

- short overview of the formation's or unit's history
- mission and subordination
- organization and location of subordinate units in the activities, as well as associated training areas
- personnel reported under paragraph (10) as well as current strength, personnel currently on mission abroad
- major weapon and equipment systems reported under paragraph (10) as well as current holdings."

-- Paragraph 3.5 should read as follows:

"3.5 In the case of a military activity within the specified area, the content of the briefing will be coordinated between the commander of the activity, or his representative, and the escort team leader. The aim is to find a good balance between transparency versus force protection and operations security. "

17. (SBU) Edits to REF B, Annex 3, on Evaluation Quota Calculation System. While Washington remains supportive of the idea that on a voluntary basis pS should consider increasing the number of opportunities for other pS to conduct evaluation visits, it does not agree with the supporting argument expressed in para 2.2. Therefore, USDel should seek to amend the NATO argument as follows:

-- Paragraph 2.2 should read:

"2.2 Few notifiable military activities i.a.w. Vienna Document 99 Chapter V have taken place in recent years. At the same time, there are significantly more inspections conducted by pS--nearly double--than evaluation visits. This inspection activity level suggests a strong desire amongst pS to visit other pS i.a.w. Vienna Document 99 to conduct CSBM missions to verify information on military forces, to observe training on a scale that is below the threshold for notification, and for transparency. "

-- Add 2.3:

"2.3 Vienna Document 99, Chapter IX, para 72, quoting the Madrid mandate, states that the CSBMs to be agreed on will be "provided with adequate forms of verification which correspond to their content." Paragraphs 107-137 specify provisions for the conduct of evaluation visits, which are intended to provide pS a specific method to verify "information provided under the provisions on Information on Military Forces..." As most pS have only one passive quota, the current formula for calculating evaluation quotas provides very limited opportunities for verification of the annual exchange of military information. Therefore, it is recommended that, on a voluntary basis, pS agree to modify the evaluation quota calculation system to account for this desire."

18. (SBU) USDel should draw from the following points to support proposed edits:

-- The U.S. does not believe that the proposed edits adequately support the course of action proposed in para 3.1 and 3.2.

-- If the goal is to increase the opportunities pS have for conducting evaluation visits, we do not consider it appropriate to address the appropriateness of pS use of inspections.

19. (SBU) Edits to Annex 4, on Size of Inspection and Evaluation Teams. USDel may join consensus, subject to

conditions in para 4 above. USDel should also propose the following edits, which are necessary for the purpose of clarity and to ensure consistency with language in VD 99:

-- Insert the article "of" in the Title and make the word "Team" plural. It should read "Size of Inspection and Evaluation Teams."

-- In paragraph 3.2, the abbreviation "sP" should be replaced with "pS."

¶10. (SBU) Edits to Annex 5, On the Use of Digital Cameras and GPS. The U.S. is not prepared at this time to agree to any reference in the paper to digital cameras and digital video recorders. USDel may draw from the following as necessary:

-- Participating States seem to have little difficulty in using digital photo and video cameras during VD99 inspections and evaluation visits.

-- Without evidence suggesting that there is a problem or that pS are not being allowed to exercise their rights to conduct inspections and evaluations, we do not believe that it is necessary to address this subject in this paper.

If needed, USDel may also support the U.S. position by referencing the statistics noted in Ref A, namely:

-- Paragraph 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 note that pS have received positive replies to their requests to use digital cameras and digital video recorders at least 98 percent of the time.

-- Also, that 8 percent of the positive replies to pS requests for use of digital cameras and digital video recorders include restrictions. (Note--no Ally has suggested that such restrictions have impeded successful completion of their inspection/evaluation.)

¶11. (SBU) With the removal of references to digital cameras and subject to conditions on voluntary nature of the contents of the paper as noted in para 4 above, USDel may join consensus.

¶12. (SBU) USDel should also propose the following edits, which are necessary for the purpose of clarity and to ensure consistency with language in VD 99:

-- Paragraph 3.2 should be edited to read:

"3.2 If a participating State desires to use GPS devices during an evaluation visit or inspection, that pS should include a request to bring and to use GPS devices. If the receiving pS denies this request, the receiving pS should provide GPS devices to the inspectors or evaluators of the requesting pS to be used for measuring the coordinates of units during evaluation visits and for identifying the borders of the specified area during inspections."

¶13. (SBU) Should Allies reject any of the U.S. proposed edits that are necessary for us to join consensus, USDel should make the following statement:

-- The U.S. regrets that Allies were not able to come to consensus on (all) the remaining papers. We recognize and appreciate the efforts of sponsoring Allies and the International Staff throughout this process. While we cannot join consensus on an agreed NATO approach, we encourage the sponsors to consider presenting their papers at the AIAM as national positions with the understanding that the U.S. may voice its national position as needed.

Next Steps?

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¶14. (C) Despite an announcement by France at the January

meeting of Experts (Ref C) that France would table three of the remaining four discussion papers, it is unclear as to whether France had coordinated its decision with authoring Allies, whether those Allies agreed, and /or whether other authoring Allies intend to table agreed, or discarded discussion papers at the AIAM. As suggested in January, USDel should ask allies to clarify their intentions on tabling papers at the AIAM. Specifically:

-- Do the authors of any of the papers reviewed in the VCC intend to table their papers, with our without consensus?

-- Does France still intend to table three papers or only the paper they authored?

-- Do those Allies intending to table papers have any sense of the approach their capitals want them to take in doing so?

VCC

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¶15. (C/REL NATO) USDel is requested to announce that the U.S. rescheduled its evaluation of the Russian federation from week five to week seven.

On the Margins

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¶16. (C) In the wake of Georgia's declaration of force majeure for Russian requests to conduct a VD 99 evaluation visit and a VD 99 inspection, the Georgian Charge offered additional explanatory remarks to Department reps on 30 January. In addition, he conveyed Georgia's request that the U.S. consider conducting a verification activity in Georgia soon, noting that this would demonstrate that Georgia intends to comply with the provisions of VD 99.

¶17. (C/REL NATO) According to the 2009 deconflicted schedule, Spain is scheduled to conduct an evaluation visit to Georgia during the week 16-20 February, and France and Hungary will inspect Georgia during the weeks of 23-27 February and 16-20 March respectively.

¶18. (C/REL NATO) USDel should approach Spain, France and Hungary on the margins to indicate that:

-- Georgian authorities approached the U.S. on January 30 to suggest that we consider conducting a Vienna Document event in Georgia as soon as possible, to give Georgia an opportunity to demonstrate that it has nothing to hide and is ready to receive VDOC visits from participating states other than Russia.

-- In principle, the U.S. believes that additional transparency in the region would be useful, sooner rather than later.

-- However, we do not want to disrupt other Allies' evaluation and inspection plans. We did want to share with Allies the Georgian interest in this matter.

-- In that spirit, we also want to share the information that Georgian authorities have told us they would be prepared to accept Russian participation on teams led by NATO Allies.

-- If Allies agree, the U.S. would inform Georgia that while the U.S. schedule does not allow for conducting such an activity in the near term, we have shared Georgia's request with some Allies and it is possible their schedules may allow them to conduct verification activities in the near term.

CLINTON